

TROUBLES OF THE COUNTRY—THEIR CAUSE AND CURE.

SPEECH OF HON. SIDNEY DEAN, OF CONNECTICUT, IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JULY 23, 1856,

Against the Extension of Slavery into Territory now Free.

Mr. DEAN said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The country is in trouble. No man upon the floor of this House can shut his eyes to this fact, or close his ears against the clamors of an excited and indignant nation. Gentlemen may gloss it over by party harangues and party promises; but the people, sir, will pay no heed, until the cause of that trouble is removed, and the country is brought back to its old compacts, and stands again upon its old ground. It is in vain, sir, that gentlemen offer new compromises, that they look for a new pacifier for the country, while they willfully persist in sustaining a wrong which an indignant country has repudiated. The people in solid masses meet to utter their voice against the present position of our General Government upon our internal domestic affairs. Upon our Atlantic coast, the commercial men stood for a long time, looking with anxiety to see whether the cloud precipitated upon us by a filibustering Administration was charged with the red lightning of war or not; while in the West, Kansas stands as a battle-ground, its sods reddened with the blood of freemen, and its smouldering ruins and desolate hearthstones proclaiming internal feud—yea, sir, the horrors of civil war. The North and West are giving their men and pouring out their treasure to sustain Freedom there; and the South, taking advantage of a neighboring sovereignty, pour in upon its ballot-boxes, and at the point of the bowie-knife and the end of a revolver, subjugate the people and make for them their laws.

The issue of all, the reason of all, the basis of all this lies in the simple question, Shall Freedom or Slavery be the ruling, predominant feature of the model Republic of the world? That question can be answered but in one way. Freedom, human, personal freedom, the ful-

filment of the great sentiment "that all men are created free and equal, and endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," will be the national ruling of this country for future centuries, or the sun of its past glory will set in drapery crimsoned by its own blood, ere it reaches a century of its existence. Human liberty and chattel slavery are the very opposites of each other. You may as well attempt to wed the darkness to the light, to make modest virtue the daily handmaid of abhorrent vice, as to mingle, harmonize, and unite in a common nationality, the doctrine of personal liberty and republican sovereignty with the personal chattel slavery of the many, bought, sold, bartered, or exchanged, and owned, body and soul, by the few. It is a political and a moral impossibility.

In discussing the questions involved in the present state of our country's affairs—their causes and their cure—I beg to be understood by every man upon this floor. I shall confine myself to the use of parliamentary language, and avoid personal allusions; but, in the discussion of principles, and the bearing of those principles, I shall submit to no man's dictation as to the terms I may use. I speak in the name of a constituency who love Liberty better than life. I speak for men who, in the days of Liberty's peril, spoke for themselves, in want, in hunger, in summer's heat and winter's cold, upon most of the battle-fields of the Revolution. Nay, sir, the ashes of the gallant and brave old General Israel Putnam, the hero of Bunker Hill and the wolf-den, repose in their quietude in the beautiful valley of my own home, and his love of Liberty actuates the hearts of all my constituents. I speak as a Representative, as a man, and as a lover of my whole country. I shall draw no invidious compari-

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sons between the sister States of our common Confederation, but shall answer my own conscience, and the voice of my constituents, by uttering plainly and fearlessly my sentiments.

I said, sir, that Liberty and Slavery could not have a common nationality in one common Government or upon common soil. Let the history of past nations by their record attest the truth of this proposition; and let us also examine our own history, to see if anywhere in the past this misnomer can be found.

Slavery, personal chattel slavery, existed previous to the Confederation of the original thirteen States. It existed there by municipal, colonial, or State enactment, and was controlled and protected by State law. We had then no distinct nationality, no common constitutional federation, but were independent sovereignties in fact. When the Convention that formed our Constitution was held, from which we were to receive our constitutional birth as a nation, this question of chattel slavery manifested itself, and awoke the deepest anxiety among the patriots who composed that Convention.

Slavery then was in its infancy in this country. Good men, of the South as well as the North, looked upon it as a system of tyranny that must die out of necessity, amid the bright effulgence of civil liberty and personal freedom. The word *slave* even was not incorporated into the sacred instrument which had its birth in such noble hearts.

But to secure the harmony of the States, and effect the object of union, so much to be desired then, mutual concessions were made. They would not, in my opinion, be made in a like Convention, to effect a like purpose, if it should be held to-morrow. But then it was a time of trial for the young country, and Slavery was but a comparative handful. Now, we are stretching up to our century of age, and chattel slavery has stalked up to the huge numeral of almost four millions of souls. The Convention decided to allow slaves, or "other persons," as the instrument delicately words it, to be counted in the representation of the country in the Federal councils. The *chattel* of to-day, whose manhood is ignored by Southern laws, and whose *personality* as a man is sunk earthward to a beast, was then and there by our fathers exalted to a "person," and counted in the roll of representation. It was, in my opinion, a fatal blunder; for it gave rise to the doctrine of *property* representation, so inconsistent with the purity of republican institutions and government.

Mr. Gouverneur Morris, in debating this question, said:

"He never would concur in upholding domestic slavery. It was a nefarious institution, it was the curse of Heaven on the States where it prevailed. Compare the free regions of the middle States, where a rich and noble cultivation marks the prosperity and happiness of the people, with the misery and poverty which overspread the barren wastes of Virginia, Maryland, and the other States having slaves. Travel through the whole continent, and

you behold the prospect continually varying with the appearance and disappearance of Slavery. The moment you leave the Eastern States, and enter New York, the effects of the institution become visible. Passing through the Jerseys, and entering Pennsylvania, every criterion of superior improvement witnesseth the change. Proceed southwardly, and every step you take through the great regions of slaves presents a desert increasing with the increasing proportion of these wretched beings. Upon what principle is it that the slaves shall be computed in the representation? Are they men? Then make them citizens and let them vote. Are they property? Why, then, is no other property included?"

"The houses in this city (Philadelphia) are worth more than all the wretched slaves who cover the rice-swamps of South Carolina. The admission of slaves into the representation, when fairly explained, comes to this: that the citizen of Georgia and South Carolina, who goes to the coast of Africa, and, in defiance of the most sacred laws of humanity, tears away his fellow-creatures from their dearest connections, and damns them to the most cruel bondage, shall have more votes in a Government instituted for the protection of the rights of mankind, than the citizen of Pennsylvania or New Jersey, who views with a laudable horror so nefarious a practice. He would add, that domestic slavery is the most prominent feature in the aristocratic countenance of the proposed Constitution. The vassalage of the poor has ever been the favorite offspring of aristocracy; and what is the proposed compensation to the Northern States, for a sacrifice of every principle of right, of every impulse of humanity?"

The answer is, the problematical taxation of the people—a contingency not likely to happen, except by the duties upon imports, which Mr. Morris showed would bear heavier upon the free than upon the slave States. Thus spoke Mr. Gouverneur Morris, on the 8th of August, 1787.—(*Madison Papers*, vol. 5, p. 392.) What would he say now concerning the institution, and its swelling power, which threatens to absorb all our liberties, if he could rise from his pillow of death, and stand in our midst? The views of Mr. Morris were sustained by Mr. Dayton, of New Jersey, and others.

One step further: the Convention, in framing a section upon the comity which should exist between the independent sovereignties as thus confederated, provided that persons owing service in one State, and fleeing into another, should not by such flight be absolved from the payment of the service they owed, but should be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service was due.

Although the term "slave" is not used in this, or in any clause of the Constitution, yet it has been claimed and acted upon by Congress as fully applying to escaped slaves. I shall not now question that application, although it is doubted by good men and true in the North, who think from its wording it can only have reference to escaped apprentices, as in their judgment the born slave owes no service but that given by a piratical and barbarous code.

Then these are the only acknowledgments of Slavery's existence in the independent States which were by this Convention constitutionally federated. This is all of constitutional acknowledgment which Slavery, as a State institution, finds in that instrument which you and I, sir, have sworn to support. The tenor of the whole instrument is for Freedom; yea, sir, Freedom to all, or, as it is expressed in the preamble;

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain," &c.

How, then, shall that instrument be interpreted, but by that common sense and legal principle that its minutiae are to be rendered according to its design, as expressed in its general principles? I have, sir, thus briefly gone back to the earlier days; for in this age of slave filibustering, when partisan politicians are desiring to establish a huge slave oligarchy, it is well that all of us should go back and look at the fountain from which our stream of constitutional government had its origin.

These, then, sir, are the acknowledgments by which our Constitution recognises Slavery in the States.

Now, sir, the First Congress saw fit to endorse and give a legal and constitutional force to an ordinance, penned by the immortal Jefferson, which had passed the previous Continental Congress, known as the celebrated Ordinance of 1787; and that Ordinance especially and specifically provided that in *all* the territory which the United States then possessed, there should neither be Slavery nor involuntary servitude upon a single inch of it. With what consistency, then, can the advocates of Slavery's nationality and Slavery's constitutionality rise and claim the sanction of that sacred instrument, in the fulfillment of their designs? How can they ignore these most emphatic utterances of the Convention and the First Congress? The so-called Democratic doctrine of to-day has no foundation in the Republicanism or Democracy of our early history.

To give force to the great national principle of Freedom, an amendment to the Constitution was proposed and passed, using language indicating as full an application to one man as another, by which no "person" should "be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." What is the signification of "person," as used throughout that instrument and all the early laws? Does not the clause in reference to the rendition of fugitives from service use the term "person?" Does not the article upon representation use the same word? And in the amendment, has it not the same language and signification? I admit it has not, in the lexicography of the slave propagandists of 1856. But did it not, in the early days, when constitutional Liberty was first inaugurated upon our soil? That Ordinance also provided that persons owing service or labor in one State, if the fugitive, panting for freedom, turned his weary footsteps towards the line of the north star, and entered the Territory, he should be given up, upon application. Ay, sir, the language incorporated into that Ordinance is a *verbatim* copy of the clause in the Constitution.

The same spirit of compromise which gave that clause of our Constitution its legal birth, gave existence also to that rendition enactment

which fell a dead letter at the feet of freemen. The moral and religious sentiments of the people smote it by a glance of indignation, and it shriveled up in death, and became powerless for action. The principle which must underlie all such enactments, if carried out, will subvert the liberties of any people, for it is nothing less than the asserted kingly prerogative of one man to subjugate and enslave his fellow by force of law. It is the very opposite of republicanism, which declares *all men free and equal*, with a like endowment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, at the hands of their *common Creator*. I said, sir, that this feature of the Ordinance of 1787 fell a dead letter from its birth. The history of the country shows it.

The great and good men of both North and South looked then for the extinction and utter annihilation of Slavery by independent State action. Thomas Jefferson, as early as 1776, introduced a resolution into the Legislature of Virginia, to revise the laws of that State, and was appointed upon a committee to report a bill for that purpose. Upon the introduction of that report, Mr. Jefferson took occasion to say:

"The bill on the subject of slaves was a mere digest of the existing laws respecting them, without any intimation of a plan for a future and general emancipation. It was thought better that this should be kept back, and attempted only by way of amendment whenever the bill should be brought on. The principles of the amendment, however, were agreed on; that is to say, the freedom of all born after a certain day, and deportation at a proper age; but it was found that the public mind would not yet bear the proposition, nor will it bear it even at this day; yet the day is not distant when it *must* bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people *are to be free*; nor is it less certain that the two races equally free cannot live in the same Government. Nature, habit, opinion, have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degree as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their places be *pari passu* filled up with white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up." (*Jefferson's Life*, vol. 1, page 39.)

I have thus, Mr. Chairman, given at some length the views of Mr. Jefferson upon the subject, as early as 1776. What his views of the deportation of children born on the soil, and whose darkness of skin is so rapidly being changed by the introduction of white blood, might now be, I am unable to say.

I am sorry, sir, that the years succeeding the birth of our Constitution did not realize the sentiments of the fathers upon the extinction of Slavery. It has grown with our growth, and strengthened itself with our strength. New States have been admitted, whose fair fields have been sullied with the curse of human bondage. Battles have been fought, and territory acquired by conquest or purchase, in order to extend its area. The nation has aroused itself, and growled forth its menace against these repeated breaches of a past public faith, and then again subsided into its accustomed pursuits. This Hall, sir, has been an arena where the battle has been fought over

the right of the people to petition Congress upon the subject of Human Slavery. Thank God! the right of freemen, the right to petition, ultimately triumphed.

But, sir, in 1850, such had been the steady encroachments of the slave principle, that another compromise was effected, to take its place by the side of its illustrious relative of 1820. The former had given peace to the country by yielding to the extension of Slavery, and at the same time prohibiting its introduction north of $36^{\circ} 30'$. Excitement followed that submission to the demands of Slavery, but it subsided, and in a thirty years' comparative truce, Slavery gathered up her garments and stalked forth, gathering increasing strength. In 1850, Texas and California knocked at our doors for admission, and Slavery again convulsed the country with its demands. Pacification and compromise was the order of the day, and the omnibus bill carried itself through, freighted with four new slave States to be made from the slaveholding State of Texas, and the birth of a new fugitive-slave-catching child. That bill is a moral and political monstrosity, having its birth in the free Republic of the world. Striking down all personal rights, and annihilating trial by jury, it gave birth to irresponsible men, who sit in judgment upon the freedom and manhood of others, with their descendants after them. It also placed in his palm an extra fee of five dollars, if the victim at his bar should be sent to Slavery in preference to walking forth a free man. Again the country was aroused, and indignant citizens gathered to resolve and prepare for the time of trial for their own personal liberty. That law, sir, is dead; it has been galvanized into existence occasionally by the strong power of the Federal Government, and at an outlay of expense which staggers its participants. It must needs die, sir; the Christian men in the model Republic of the world, in this year of grace, will not be bloodhounds to catch men. It is as revolting to nature as it is offensive to the laws of God. Those "prejudices" will never be "conquered," at the *dictum* of any man or set of men.

But, sir, the country was again subsiding, interrupted by an occasional attempt to enforce the Fugitive Slave Bill, when, in the year of grace 1854, Slavery began a new era. It tore up the planks laid down by a mutual compromise in 1820, and violated its plighted faith. No amount of petition, no pleadings at its merciless bar, availed. After a long, continuous, and stormy session of this House, the flag, announcing the repudiation of a nation's plighted faith for thirty years, was thrown to the breeze. The country saw it, and a shiver of indignation and fear for our country's perpetuity ran like an electric shock from the Atlantic on the East to the Rocky Mountains upon the West. That storm has not yet subsided, and it never will, until that faith is restored

in form or in fact. Gentlemen may offer measures of pacification—may suggest new compromises—may stretch their eyes over the whole political horizon, anxiously looking for a great pacifier, who in this emergency can hush the angry and turbulent waves that threaten to engulf us; but they will look in vain. The note of repeal rings through every Northern heart. If the South are bent upon pursuing this suicidal policy, they must answer to the God of nations for the calamity which is sure to come.

The battle of Liberty and Slavery in Kansas is but a fair, legitimate deduction from such premises. Any man, however limited his vision, could have seen that when that bill passed which smote Southern faith and honor until it reeled and fell, that an indignant North would people that Territory, and fight the battle of Freedom there, if the North were decimated in the contest. Gentlemen may look for, and hope for, a cessation of hostilities, and a quiet and tame subserviency of the people there to the behests of Slavery. Sir, they do not know them. The North, cool and sluggish in her movements, when aroused fairly, and awake fully, as she is now awake, knows no obstacle she will not surmount for the Liberty of her country and her children. The men who emigrated to Kansas went there for life. Having faith still that the Government would right the wrongs done by the repeal of the Missouri restriction, they have suffered with the spirit of martyrs. A neighboring slave State has invaded her Territory—usurped her rights—at the ballot-box—inaugurated an illegitimate Legislature—enacted by the solemn farce of law a code which would do violence to the instincts of the Autocrat of all the Russias—muzzled the lips of the people, and locked the door of the press-room, or thrown the type into the river. Yea, more, sir! it has hunted men for their free opinions, and sacked cities of free-men under the sanction of law, backed by all the power of this corrupt Administration.

By the power of the military, this same Administration enforces laws which declare, that to speak, write, or print thoughts of Freedom is to be punished by incarceration in prison as a felon. To say to a fellow-man, upon the common soil of a free Republic, that he is free, and stretching forth the hand to enable him to assert and secure that Freedom, the American citizen shall be punished with death. Nay, more, sir: the same spirit of Slavery establishes a false code of honor in the National Capitol; and if the free utterances of the representatives of the people do not suit its despotic instincts, it initiates even in these chambers its correspondence to provoke a freeman to an illegal and bloody field of duelling.

Sir, I repudiate the whole of it. I will never submit to any feature of it, either in the concrete or abstract. All the moral feelings of my

being, all the instincts of my better nature, all the precepts of a holy Christianity, revolt against a system which gives birth to such a progeny. And, sir, in this I represent the feelings and views of the Christian world.

Gentlemen may cry peace—may ask for a new compromise, in which Slavery shall be acknowledged in its present demands, but an outraged and thoroughly indignant people will never consent to any such arrangement. They demand the unconditional repeal of that clause of the Kansas-Nebraska act which broke down and set aside a mutual compact of thirty years' standing. They require that gentlemen shall restore to the common altar of the country the faith which has been stolen from it. I had the honor of submitting to this House the resolutions of the Legislature of my own State, in which the voice of the people of that State has said :

STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, May Session, 1855.

Whereas the bill organizing the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas was in itself premature and uncalled for; in its abrogation of the Missouri Compromise, a needless violation of a time-honored compact; in its passage, pressed with indecent haste upon a reluctant Congress and an outraged country; and, in its results, has awakened dangerous sectional agitation, and led to lawless violence in the Territories themselves;

And whereas, in support of that act, the doctrine has of late been promulgated, that the persons inhabiting the Territories of the United States are, or ought to be, within their respective Territorial limits, sovereign for all purposes of legislation, though dependent upon the Executive branch of the General Government for their judicial and executive administration; and as such a doctrine is believed by the good people of this State to be false in theory and dangerous in practice: Therefore,

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened, That the recent act of Congress, entitled "A bill to organize the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas," deserves, as it has received from the people of Connecticut, an unqualified condemnation.

Resolved, That it is not only the right of Congress "to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the Territories belonging to the United States," but it is also the duty of the National Legislature to exercise that right in such manner as will best conduce to the lasting welfare of those who are, in future generations, to occupy our vast domain.

And whereas the subject of national legislation for the national Territories is, at the present time, a matter of grave concern to the whole country, and it is proper that the people of each State should, in the spirit of intelligent patriotism, express their sentiments and purposes thereon, and as the fathers of Connecticut did, by their legislative acts, in the years 1774 and 1784, declare that "the increase of slaves in this State" was "injurious to the poor and inconvenient," and that "sound policy" did "require that the abolition of Slavery should be effected" therein, "as soon as might be consistent with the rights of individuals and the public safety and welfare;" and as the inhabitants of this State have ever had reason to be grateful for the wise foresight by which our beloved Commonwealth has been freed from the manifold evils of human bondage, and we believe it to be our duty, as a portion of the American people, to aid in establishing upon a broad and firm foundation the prosperity of the States yet to be added to the Confederacy : Therefore,

Resolved, That Connecticut will never consent to the extension of Slavery over the common domain of the United States; but, on the contrary, believing that the free institutions which an experience almost coeval with the life of the Republic has proved to be good for her, are and will be good for all future Commonwealths, she will strive, to the best of her ability, to exclude the relation of human bondage from the national Territories.

And whereas it appears that one of the Territories of this Union has been invaded by an armed and organized force, for the purpose of destroying the freedom of the

elective franchise among the inhabitants thereof, which purpose has been accomplished by brutal violence, and the repetition of the like outrage is openly threatened: Therefore,

Resolved, That it is the duty of the General Government to protect, even by armed intervention if necessary, the people of the Territories in the exercise of all their rights, and that the national Administration which neglects to perform this duty is recreant alike to the Constitution and the best interests of the Union.

And whereas the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 is, in its requirements, insulting to the spirit of freemen, in its details subversive of State rights, in its operation productive of dangerous sectional agitation, and as a law is of doubtful constitutionality: Therefore,

Resolved, That while the people of Connecticut are prepared to comply with the Constitution of the United States, in all its parts, without equivocation or reservation, they will yet insist, in all proper times and places, that an act so justly odious in its character shall be materially modified or wholly repealed.

And whereas, upon most of the topics embraced in the foregoing resolutions, there are and must be differences of opinion, more or less indicated by geographical lines; and whereas false and designing men, taking advantage of that circumstance, have endeavored and are endeavoring to sow the seeds of civil dissension and disunion: Therefore,

Resolved, That Connecticut regards the people of the United States as one people, bound together by the ties of a common history, a common glory, and a common destiny; that she cherishes with fraternal regard each and every State of the Union; that she loves that Union, and will stand by it, support it, and defend it from all assaults, at home or abroad; and, in these troubled times, she calls upon the other members of the Confederacy, in the spirit of patriotic conciliation, to unite with her in cementing anew the foundations of our common nationality.

Resolved, That copies of the preambles and resolutions, certified by the Secretary of State, be transmitted by his Excellency the Governor to the Senators and Representatives of this State in Congress, to be laid before the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, and to the Governors of the several States and Territories of the Union, to be laid before the legislative authorities thereof.

Approved, June 15, 1855.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, Office of Secretary of State, ss:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of record in this office.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and [SEAL.] affixed the seal of said State, at Hartford, this 23d of June, A. D. 1855.

N. D. SPERRY, Secretary of State.

From this position, the citizens of Connecticut will not be moved. Restore the compact, and that will be an accepted pledge of future peace; but if the aiders, abettors, and defenders of slave extension still insist that Slavery shall be nationalized—if Freedom for the Territories shall henceforth be utterly ignored, and the new doctrine is admitted and practiced upon, that the Constitution of the United States carries Slavery wherever it goes, and it cannot be restricted by Congress, then this nation has fallen upon an evil day, and its future is dark and fearful. I tell gentlemen, in the honest convictions of my heart, that my constituents, neither in thought, word, nor deed, will ever acquiesce in thus branding our national character with infamy, and will never, for themselves, be made the political or personal slaves of such a monstrosity in republicanism.

The Missouri restriction can be restored in one of two ways. First, by repealing so much of the Kansas-Nebraska act as negated that restriction. Second, by admitting Kansas as a free State, and pledging the country to the future admission of all others who may apply from north of 36° 30'.

Before closing, sir, I desire to call the attention of the House and the country to the remarkable biblical argument for the support of chattel slavery, as it exists in this country, which was offered by the gentleman from Georgia, [Mr. STEPHENS.] I am sorry sir, that the gentleman is not now in his seat. I have heard, sir, of "lower-law divines," who have fulminated from their pulpits doctrines similar to those uttered by the distinguished gentleman; but, sir, he cannot have posted himself up on those questions by a reference to long and able discussions which have taken place, in which the ablest minds and most accomplished divines of the country have borne a part. The allusions of the gentleman to Jewish history are dated as far back as the time when the "father of the faithful" and his coadjutors held servants. But would he reason from that, that it is *right* and *just* for us in this age, and under this better dispensation? If the earth was then infantile in its existence, and in its moral perceptions of God and equal justice, would he cite God's forbearance as an argument for the divine *establishment* of a system repulsive to every feature of a perfect law? If polygamy was endured, would he reason from that premise the false conclusion, that God ordained, established, and sanctioned, polygamy? Or that we could follow the system to-day without violating divine law? If the gentleman gathers his views of duty from the local laws of Judaism, will he subscribe to its whole doctrine, and give us a moral and political address upon that feature of the law which declares that "he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death?" (Exodus xxi, 16.) And also that portion in Deuteronomy xxiii, 15 and 16, with its application to the fugitive slave enactment, which reads as follows:

"Thou shalt *not* deliver unto his master the servant which has escaped from his master unto thee: He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him."

But, sir, when he entered upon that purer and brighter dispensation of the world's Divine Redeemer, and attempted a defence of Slavery by using the language of a Roman soldier, making it the language of Him whose great mission He himself proclaimed to be "the opening of prison doors to them who were bound, and making *free* the oppressed," I confess, sir, I was moved with pity for the weakness of his logic. All His teachings are embodied in the glorious principle of *love*. The law which He lays down for the government of the social world is in a nut-shell, such is its terseness of expression. "Thou shalt *love* thy neighbor as thyself:" applied, it says—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." Now, sir, when the gentleman from Georgia, or any other man defending Slavery, seeks his defense from the teachings of "the Nazarene,"

let him comply with the law which He has given. Is the gentleman willing to be the slave of his own bondman? Is he willing that all of himself, body, soul and labor—all of his family, wife and children, shall be put in complete and abject subjection to the misfortunes or caprices of his chattel? Will he

"Fan him while he sleeps,
And tremble when he wakes?"

Will he submit to have his manhood blotted out, and he himself become a chattel? If so, I will bow in respect to the mistaken view of Christianity represented in his life, and seek to win him to that more exalted view of the mission of Christ, which would place master and servant upon an equality before a just God, and an equal right to life, liberty, family, and property, in social life. Hereafter, sir, let no more be said concerning the prostitution of the Northern pulpit in its discussions of chattel slavery and its results. When it is defended upon this floor as a Christian institution, sanctioned by the world's Saviour, I call upon the ministry of that Christianity to discuss, fully and fearlessly, these claims of its advocates. If, upon a fair discussion—yea, sir, upon a full "agitation" of this question—it shall appear that it is a poisonous and inharmonious portion of a pure and healthful code which God has given for the world's government, then we shall have learned that the fabric of government instituted and commanded by a perfect God is not in itself perfect.

I think, sir, that in the future pages of our history it will appear that, for this feature of our national sins, we shall receive a just measure of national punishment at His hands.

And, sir, what is this system, for which its advocates claim the sanction of the Divine law, the law of nature, and the high authority of constitutional power, for its extension? It is a system, sir, which annihilates the image of God in humanity, where He placed it, by destroying the human will. It has power to shroud the human mind in darkness—to stifle its deathless longings after education, civilization, and refinement. It smites down, and crushes under its relentless heel, the rising swell of human affection. It nips in the germ parental ties, and sends the offspring to the auction-block, making merchandise of a mother's love—as it does of the body and soul of her offspring. It makes mockery of conjugal affection, and sunder those sacred ties which our Divine Father pronounced indissoluble by man. It rears immortals for the shambles, and dooms the long line of descendants to the same end. Sir, is that Christianity? Then I am an infidel! Is that nature? Then, sir, my soul revolts against that nature mother who bore me. Is that our boasted constitutional republicanism? Then where, in Heaven's name, is absolute monarchy, and upon what scroll shall I look for the word "tyranny?" Sir, as an American, I repudiate the whole of it. It is a

foul blot upon our national escutcheon. It dims the glory of our eagle's eye; and wherever it stalks, it leaves its long withering curse behind its footsteps. The monarchies of the Old World, both absolute and limited, point at us in derision. We are a living contradiction in our professions and practice. Mr. Chairman, there are times when the patriot heart sinks within itself at the remembrance of our shame. If the curse can still be local, sectional, and not *national*, the free patriots of the North and West may shake their garments in innocence of this triple offence against God, against Humanity, and against Republican Liberty. But if it shall be pressed to a national existence, planting itself like a huge leprosy spot upon all our domain, by the inauguration of this new policy at the coming election, then Heaven have mercy upon the nation!

What a strange record of inconsistencies is this history of Slavery! It was a curse—it is now a blessing. It was anti-republican—it is now Gospel, Nature, and Republicanism. It has coaxed, cajoled, and threatened, by turns. It has solemnly promised the country peace in a "*finality*," and ere the words were cold, it has hurled sectional firebrands throughout the length of the land. It has proclaimed "*squatter sovereignty*," and then repudiated it—the right of the people to make their own laws, and then committed forays in armed bands upon the ballot-box. Nay, more, sir. It has usurped the power of the military; and, with loaded cannon and gleaming sabres, it has forcibly dissolved a Legislature which this House has pronounced legal. It has convulsed the country to its furthest extremes, and has inaugurated its power by the use of the cane upon the head of a member in the Senate Chamber of the Republic of the world. Sir, if that is Liberty, I have forgotten the lessons of my early life; if that is Democracy, I have no Democratic constituency; if that is Christianity, then the moral people among whom I bow my knees when at home, worship another God, whose whole being, attributes, and laws, are arrayed in hostility to this scheme for the debasement of men.

Sir, I have done. I have briefly offered my views upon the character of Slavery, as antagonistic to Republican Liberty. I have shown that it has no constitutional acknowledgement, except in a compromise upon the subject of representation in this House, and in an act specifying the comity which should exist between States. I have read brief extracts upon that subject from words uttered in the Convention which framed our Constitution, and have given you the early views of the immortal Jefferson upon the dangers which must inevitably arise from the perpetuity of Slavery in our Republic. I have also looked at the causes of our present trouble, and indicated the measure

of policy and justice to be pursued, to give repose to a distracted country. I would, sir, that I could believe that even this would place us, as a nation, beyond the possibility of a national overthrow, in consequence of this deadly evil and crime. I cannot shut my eyes to the fearful fact, that Slavery doubles its miserable population once in twenty-seven years; and that, if our country should abide even the contests of the coming half century, the feet of about fifteen millions of bondmen will press the soil of our Republic. I contemplate it with horror!

Dark as the future looks, I will not interfere with its existence as a State institution, except in the use of lawful moral means, but leave the consequences of it to those who cherish it, and are alone responsible for it; but with every energy of my being, in public or private life, I give an unfaltering opposition to its nationality, or its further extension. I would have the country see and feel the responsibility which rests upon every patriot, North, South, East, and West, in the coming election. One great party,

"The sheen of whose spears was like stars on the sea"

in 1840, and whose votes would have elected a President without the aid of a single slave State, has gone to its final rest, and is to-day the subject of fulsome eulogy by its opponents. It died, sir, in consequence of its subserviency to the behests of Slavery. Its mighty leader, a Saul among his kinsmen, a perfect giant in his mental power and moral convictions, lusted for office in an evil hour, and, vaulting, threw himself into the breach for the defence of the peculiar institution. He was covered with garlands by the hands of Slavery, and led away to the altar of sacrifice at Baltimore. He retired to his Marshfield home, looked in the faces and felt the breath of those huge oxen who had not, like his fellow-men, betrayed him, and then went to his long repose. Sir, he sleeps now where

"Old ocean
Plays the wild, profound, eternal bass"

in his funeral anthem. The great Whig party fell with him, to rise no more.

The so-called Democracy of the country, under cover of its party catch-phrases, seeks now the universal spread of the chattel system. It has nominated a man who glories in his entity being extinguished, he himself having become a *doulos*, or, as the gentleman from Georgia translates it, a slave to the platform of the Cincinnati filibustering Democratic Convention. The people will soon decide whether they will inaugurate this principle of chattelism as a national system, or whether free speech, free press, free soil, shall be perpetuated to their children by the election of the true patriot, Fremont. God grant that they may decide it right!

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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